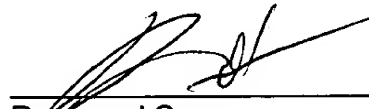


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In view of the foregoing, early examination and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if he/she believes that doing so will expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 9-20-01



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this paper is being deposited in the U.S. Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231

Dated: Sept. 20, 2001



Donna Dice